

following in Iraq: Prevent violent conflict, promote post-conflict stability and development, increase conflict management capacity, promote tolerance and forgiveness, and facilitate regional dialogue.

We believe that the Institute's work will also encourage nations from outside the region to get involved. Reconciliation in Iraq has become something like the weather: Everyone here in Washington talks about it, but no one can really do anything about it. We just sort of sit around and wait for the Iraqi government to meet their reconciliation benchmarks. Then, when they don't, we make speeches.

This bill is an opportunity to do something about reconciliation by supporting an organization that knows how to get the job done. And this bill we can all get behind, because no matter where we stand on the Iraq issue we all support reconciliation.

I am proud to join with Representative SHAYS in asking all of our colleagues in the House on both sides of the aisle to cosponsor this critically important bipartisan bill.

POLICE GONE WILD—MEXICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, brutal actions of local and state police are going unpunished; and, as the founder of the Victims Right Caucus, I bring this serious matter to the House's attention.

Two years ago, on May 3 and 4, 2006, there was a lawful protest in support of local flower sellers who had been displaced from their business because a new airport was being built. During the protest, law enforcement officers arrested and detained 47 separate women. The police officers didn't read the women their rights; the women were just arrested, locked up, and taken into custody. Then, Madam Speaker, the officers beat and sexually assaulted them. I repeat, they beat and sexually assaulted the 47 women that were arrested. Obviously, lawmen have become outlaws.

One of the 47 women was Barbara Mendez, a 27-year-old student and a child advocate. Barbara went to the protest because she heard a child was killed in the violence between the police and the protesters. As a child advocate, Barbara went to show her support for the child and her community. But after Barbara arrived at the protest, the police beat her and arrested her because she was with the protesters and supposedly blocking a road. Barbara was placed in a police vehicle and forced to take off her clothes. She was then gang raped by the police officers, as other officers watched and cheered on the rapists. Barbara was then locked up in jail for 12 days.

Madam Speaker, this is a case of police gone wild.

Jail doctors then examined Barbara, but it just so happened that they failed

to document her physical injuries or gather any forensic evidence of the rape. This evidence is crucial for any prosecution.

Madam Speaker, rape is a crime that tries to destroy the soul of the victim. And of these 47 women arrested and assaulted, 26 of them later filed complaints with authorities claiming physical, psychological, and sexual abuse during the arrest and detention. But since these assaults occurred, none of the police criminals have been brought to justice. No, not one. And this ought not to be.

Five months after the assaults, a national human rights commission called for criminal investigations into the assaults, but no investigations have occurred.

In February of 2007, the Supreme Court instructed a special judicial commission to investigate the crimes by the police in the arrest of these 47 women.

Then, Barbara Mendez and several other victims filed another complaint with federal authorities, but the federal authorities are sitting on these cases refusing to move forward. Why isn't there any justice for these women?

Next week marks the second year anniversary of these assaults, and yet none of these women have seen a courtroom. Obviously, no justice for these rape victims. Of the 47 women, two are from Spain, one is from Germany, two are from Chile, and the rest are Mexican citizens. But none of them received any justice. Basic human rights is obviously being denied.

Madam Speaker, these assaults did not occur in the United States. They occurred in San Salvador Atenco, Mexico, just 30 miles outside of Mexico City.

This issue is a world human rights issue, and this type of abuse cannot be tolerated and peace officers cannot enjoy impunity. Police officers are supposed to protect the community and keep people safe from harm, not cause harm to people. And, of course, this includes Mexican police officers. These officers must be held accountable. They need to have their day in court. And, if they are guilty, they need to be sent off to the jailhouse.

As we approach Mother's Day in the United States, Madam Speaker, we need to proclaim that mothers and women throughout the world receive the respect and honor due them. That includes justice, because justice is the one thing we should always find, even in Mexico.

And that's just the way it is.

RISING FUEL PRICES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise to express my disappointment that the administration has done nothing to rein in rising fuel prices.

The past 7 years have brought hardship to anyone in Maine with a vehicle to fill up at the gas station, a furnace to feed, or a livelihood dependent on affordable fuel.

As you can see in this chart, in January 2001 oil traded at \$23 to \$25 per barrel. This week, it topped \$120 per barrel.

In January 2001, #2 heating oil cost Maine families and businesses \$1.55 a gallon. This week, it topped \$3.85.

In January 2001, regular unleaded gasoline cost Maine drivers \$1.55 a gallon. According to the AAA, the going price in Portland this week is \$3.55 a gallon, and rising.

In January 2001, diesel for their rigs cost Maine's independent truckers \$1.53 per gallon. In Bangor this week, it was \$4.33 per gallon.

These past 7 years, the oil companies have padded their bottom lines at the expense of the hardworking people of Maine and across the country. For the past 7 years, everyone in Maine has paid a steep price for the Bush administration's disastrous energy policy and for Big Oil's efforts in Congress to block legislation to stop energy profiteering.

What has the administration done? Nothing. And they will do nothing unless the people's elected representatives push them to action.

That is why I have called upon the Federal Trade Commission, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the Attorney General of the U.S., and the Secretary of Energy to launch an immediate investigation of price fixing, manipulation, rampant speculation, and other unscrupulous behavior in the petroleum markets. Inappropriate and criminal behavior by oil companies, their subsidiaries, agents, or employees must be prosecuted and punished to the full extent of the law.

These outrageous price increases are a cruel blow for Maine families whose incomes are stagnant or shrinking, and whose costs for health insurance, college tuition, and other everyday expenses continue to rise faster than inflation. Fuel prices are an economic catastrophe for Maine farmers, fishermen, and other small business people. For some of Maine's independent truckers, like those I met on the road in Kennebunk when they were coming down here, unbridled fuel costs when coupled with a stagnating economy may very well put them out of business.

As independent truckers are staring down unemployment, oil companies are reaping record profits. However, for one sector of the economy, the last 7 years have been a bonanza.

In 2001, the Big 5 Oil companies posted combined profits of just over \$40 billion. In 2007, their combined profits topped \$123 billion. ExxonMobil's \$41 billion profit last year was more than all of the Big 5 combined in 2001, and